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PANEL ON INDOCHINESE REFUGEES RECOMMENDS CONTINUED REFUGEE PROGRAM AND NEW EMPHASIS ON IMMIGRATION

The Indochinese Refugee Panel headed by former Iowa Governor Robert D. Ray has recommended that the United States change certain policies but continue its leading role in international relief and resettlement efforts.

Among key recommendations is a shift toward use of regular immigration channels for Southeast Asians seeking admission to the United States solely for family reunification. The panel also recommends that all Cambodian cases at Thailand's Khao I Dang camp denied U.S. resettlement be reviewed and that Khao I Dang be kept open until solutions are found for all the Cambodians there.

The independent panel was appointed by Secretary of State George Shultz in September 1985 and traveled to Southeast Asia in November.

In a letter accompanying the April 18 report submitted to Shultz, the panel said, "Our objective has been to propose recommendations that will keep United States policies and programs responsive to the changing refugee situation and contribute to the search for lasting and humane solutions. In carrying out our review, we have recognized that we are standing on the shoulders of those who created this extraordinary program and made it work over the decade."

Against its commitment to humanitarian principles, the panel weighed "its responsibility to keep our refugee programs in perspective." According to the report, "The economic and social pressures caused by immigration in to the United States, legal and illegal, are real, and demand that our refugee programs must take precautions to ensure that those coming as refugees truly deserve this special status."

The State Department and the Immigration and Naturalization Service have formed a staff working group to analyze and implement the panel's recommendations, according to Frank Sieverts of the Bureau for Refugee Programs, staff director for the panel.

Panel Findings Form Basis for Recommendations

Noting that 154,000 refugees remain in camps in Southeast Asia, and 250,000 Cambodians and land Vietnamese remain along the Thai-Cambodian border, the panel

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concluded that the refugee situation "continues to warrant special coordinated international relief and resettlement efforts."

But the panel found that the nature of those fleeing Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia has changed--they are "no longer predominantly persons who were associated with the United States, nor does it appear that the majority have been singled out for harsher treatment than that generally suffered by the rest of the population."

The report says that most now leave to seek "economic and political freedom or to be reunited with family members." But the panel added, "Once having left, few can now return."

The panel reported that the situation in the United States, with many Southeast Asian refugees now established and able to help friends and relatives when they resettle, "has created a potential for greater reliance on normal immigration procedures for Indochinese now reaching first asylum."

The panel concluded that the primary causes of refugee flows in Southeast Asia are the "repressive and expansionist policies" of Vietnam, both domestically and in Cambodia and Laos.

Another observation which influenced the panel's recommendations is that reduced third country resettlement has caused the countries of Southeast Asia to seek assurance that they will not be left with a residual refugee population. Their continued willingness to provide first asylum to refugees is contingent upon such a guarantee.

Finally, the panel concluded that though U.S. leadership in programs for Southeast Asian refugees is required by its tradition of humanitarian concern, "this leadership has not been and should not be misunderstood to be the exclusive responsibility of the United States. Nor should Western resettlement be assumed to be the only durable solution for refugees and other displaced persons in Indochina. Other durable solution alternatives must be explored."

Proposals Aim to Preserve First Asylum

The panel's first recommendations deal with the threat to first asylum due to increasing residual refugee populations--"hard-to-resettle long-stayers"--especially some 35,000 Vietnamese boat refugees. The panel concludes that "international solutions eventually will have to be identified for all the long-stayers."

To achieve that, the report recommends a "share-out" program whereby resettlement countries would accept additional refugees "in return for first asylum countries agreeing to let some refugees remain," expanded resettlement of small numbers of "hard-to-place" refugees by countries who do not accept large numbers of refugees, and expanded occupational and language training programs to improve refugees' prospects for resettlement.

The United States should resume processing of cases of special concern among those refugees in first asylum without ties to the United States, the panel suggests. Current U.S. policies exclude such "Priority 6" refugees from resettlement processing in Southeast Asia.

Acknowledging that this moratorium has been a deterrent to boat departures, the panel recommends that cases should be selected on the basis of length of stay in first asylum and other compelling circumstances to avoid giving the impression that entire categories of people are being accepted or that such processing will continue indefinitely.

The panel also recommended that the U.S. and other governments provide adequate financial support for relief and resettlement to ensure continued first asylum in Southeast Asia.

Use of Immigration Channel Urged The panel suggests that, as the number of Southeast Asian refugees becoming naturalized U.S. citizens increases, the refugee program should place greater emphasis on immigrant visas. It recommends that "refugee admissions be reserved for those who meet the refugee definition and are of special humanitarian concern to the United States." Those who seek admission solely on the basis of family ties, the report says, should use immigration procedures.

The panel cautions that existing programs should be kept in place until new programs are established and that flexibility to respond to "especially compelling circumstances" should continue. Furthermore, refugees already in first asylum should be processed under current criteria. Refugee admission ceilings should be adequate and refugee processing available for those who do qualify as genuine refugees, "regardless of

where or when they arrive, and regardless of their family ties or other eligibility."

The panel recommends that, for a two-year period, new arrivals with close family ties in the United States be processed as refugees if they cannot qualify for immigrant visas within that time.

An active outreach program is recommended to encourage Indochinese to apply for citizenship in the United States and file for their relatives to enter as immigrants. An effort should also be made to publicize the changes in the program throughout Southeast Asia to avoid inducing people to flee only to be denied resettlement opportunities.

Noting its belief that the shift to immigration processing can be accomplished with adequate support through sponsoring families and without imposing new obligations on state and local authorities, the panel recommends that the administration undertake a study of benefits for Southeast Asian refugees and immigrants.

Panel Calls for ODP Improvements The panel urged both the U.S. and Vietnamese governments to make efforts to improve the Orderly Departure Program (ODP) and, especially, to facilitate the departure of Amerasians and reeducation camp prisoners.

While concluding that ODP has been an effective way for Amerasian children and their close relatives to come to the United States, the panel said "the United States should explore alternatives that could expedite the departure of this group of special concern." It recommends that the United States ask the government of Vietnam to schedule more Amerasians for interviews and for flights. ODP processing has been suspended by the Vietnamese government, though flights of people already approved continue (see Refugee Reports, vol. VII, no. 4).

The panel also recommends that no limit be placed on the number of Amerasians and close family members the United States will accept.

Although Vietnam's Foreign Minister Nguyen Co Thach told the panel that releasing the reeducation camp prisoners for U.S. resettlement is now "out of the question," the panel urges the United States to be flexible and imaginative in dealing with this problem, including being willing to discuss the issues bilaterally with Vietnam.

The panel found that anti-piracy efforts have not been sufficient so far. It recommends that the United States vigorously support both anti-piracy and rescue-at-sea efforts and that the UN High Commissioner for Refugees be more aggressive in these areas.

Solutions Needed for Refugees from Laos

In regard to the Thai program to screen arrivals from Laos for refugee status, the panel urges vigilance to assure that the screening conforms with international principles of first asylum, that those to be returned to Laos be held in decent conditions, and that Laos accepts its responsibility to accept the return of nonrefugees without adverse treatment.

Once current processing of lowland Lao is completed, the panel recommends an effort to identify "other solutions, including voluntary repatriation, possible settlement in place, and a sharing of any remaining population among resettlement nations."

For the highland Lao, the panel suggests that UNHCR should see that long-term alternatives to third-country resettlement be explored, "including self-sufficiency programs supported by international funding to enable the highlanders to contribute more actively to their own economic welfare until such time as they may be able to return to Laos."

The panel also suggests that the United States continue efforts to gain the cooperation of the Lao government for legal departures from Laos, while encouraging Lao already in the United States to petition for their family members' admission as immigrants.

Concerns about Border Cambodians Addressed

The panel addressed several recommendations to the situation of Cambodian refugees in Thailand. For those in border camps, the panel recommends that the most compelling cases be processed for immigrant visas, visas 93 (spouses and minor children of refugees in the United States), and humanitarian parole, but urges "that such processing go forward expeditiously, and that particular consideration be given to humanitarian parole for cases not qualifying for immigrant visas."

The panel agreed that refugee processing

for the Cambodians on the border remains inappropriate because most of them want to return to Cambodia and because processing "could attract them and others to the idea of third country resettlement, which could lead to a further build-up of people on the border." It warned, however, that this imposes a greater responsibility to administer the immigrant visa and humanitarian parole programs "with flexibility and generosity."

The panel said that it "believes strongly" that an expanded program of primary and secondary education for the border Cambodians is essential, as well as education and intellectual activity for adults.

For some 4,500 land Vietnamese located among 135,000 Cambodian refugees at Site 2 near the Thai-Cambodian border, the panel recommends U.S. resettlement processing that includes those refugees without ties to the United States (Priority 6), resettlement by other countries through a UNHCR program, and a site safe from Vietnamese military attacks and from other surrounding populations. U.S. processing of the land Vietnamese without regard to previous U.S. ties has begun.

Review of All Denied Cases at Khao I Dang Recommended The effort to review cases of Cambodians at Khao I Dang who were denied U.S. resettlement impressed the panel, but they recommended that the remaining denied cases at Khao I Dang be reviewed.

The panel also called on the Thai government to allow Khao I Dang to remain open until other solutions are found for those who remain there. The Thai agreement to allow processing of the 4,300 "family-card holders" should be carried out and completed this year, the panel said. However, they make no recommendations about the 7,000 "ration-card holders" who entered the camp after an August 1984 cutoff date, suggesting that the panel accepts the inevitability of the eventual return of this population to the border as there was no real way to distinguish them from the border Cambodians. The panel said that any return to the border "should be carried out only on a voluntary basis."

Finally, the panel urged increased financial support for UNHCR and other international organizations from traditional donors and others. "Despite domestic budget constraints, the United States should provide its fair share of refugee relief and resettlement support," the panel report concludes.

Copies of the Ray panel report can be requested from Frank Sieverts, Staff Director, Indochinese Refugee Panel, Bureau for Refugee Programs, Department of State, Washington, DC 20520. (202) 663-1033.

Update

° Thailand has closed three refugee camps as of April 30, according to UNHCR. The 5,400 Vietnamese boat refugees at Songkhla and Sikhiu were moved to Phanat Nikhom. The 340 Lao refugees at the Ubon reception center were moved to three other camps.

The three camps were closed as part of a government policy of reducing the number of camps, speeding the resettlement of displaced persons, and trimming Thai and UNHCR expenditures, according to the April 15 Bangkok Post.

° At least three Cambodians in the Khao I Dang camp in Thailand were severely tortured by elements of the Royal Thai Armed Forces, according to a May 6 report by Amnesty International. They were reportedly tortured with hot pokers and forced to sign confessions for involvement in a March 17 incident at the camp in which a Thai soldier was killed. Amnesty International reported that the three, and possibly a fourth, are being held in a detention facility inside the Task Force 80 command compound in Khao I Dang. Task Force 80, which guards the camps, is a special unit of the Royal Thai Armed Forces Supreme Command. UNHCR personnel have not been permitted to visit with the Cambodians, according to Amnesty International.

° The South China Morning Post, a Hong Kong newspaper, published an editorial in support of closed camps for Vietnamese refugees in Hong Kong that was reprinted in the March 20 Far Eastern Economic Review. "The longer the closed camps can be maintained, the more people in Vietnam will realize that uncontrolled flight in a leaky boat is not an escape to freedom but the beginning of a long and painful period of frustration and hardship." The editorial went on to defend ships who do not pick up Vietnamese boat people: "The wide berth that most ship's captain's now give to refugee boats is indicative of the increasing indifference of the seafaring community. We cannot condemn them for callousness, even though human lives are at stake, for shipping firms are wrestling with far bigger problems over their own survival, than worrying about the fate of a boatload of unwanted refugees."

° Nicaraguans will no longer be deported from the Immigration and Naturalization Service district in which 75 percent of Nicaraguan asylum applicants apply. Perry Rivkind, INS district director in Miami, said he would not deport Nicaraguans because he believes they may be subject to persecution by the Sandinista government.

INS spokesman Duke Austin told Refugee Reports that there has been no change in policy with regard to Nicaraguans and that a memorandum has been sent to district directors to that effect. He said, however, that Rivkind was operating within his discretionary power.

More than 60 percent of Nicaraguan asylum cases decided by INS district directors in FY 86 have been approved. This stands in marked contrast to the 13 percent approval rate for FY 85.

° Bill Gee was appointed acting director of the Office of Refugee Resettlement April 30. Gee worked as a sales representative for various publishing companies for 25 years. He was a regional sales manager of the American Book Company from 1979 to 1981. This will be his first experience working in a state or federal government program.

° C. Richard Parkins, director of the Office of Refugee Resettlement division of operations, resigned effective April 25. Parkins, who held his position at ORR for nearly six years, will join the American Council for Nationalities Service as director of program development.

° Arthur Eugene Dewey resigned May 1 as State Department deputy assistant secretary of the Bureau for Refugee Programs. He has been named the new deputy UN High Commissioner for Refugees. Dewey succeeds W.R. Smyser in this post. John Buché, a longtime staff member in the Bureau for Refugee Programs, will serve as acting deputy assistant secretary. Dewey had been deputy assistant secretary since 1981.

° As part of a major reorganization at UNHCR, Fiorella Cappelli has been appointed bureau director for Europe and North America. She left her post as UNHCR Washington representative May 9 to assume the new position at UNHCR headquarters in Geneva.

° Doris M. Meissner resigned as executive associate commissioner of the Immigration and Naturalization Service effective May 9. She will join the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Meissner joined INS as acting deputy commissioner in 1981 and has served as executive associate commissioner since February 1983.

° Deportations of Ugandan nationals in the United States unwilling to return to Uganda have been deferred until July 31, according to an April 28 memorandum from the Immigration and Naturalization Service. Roger Winter, director of the U.S. Committee for Refugees, wrote to Alan Nelson, INS commissioner, on April 29, saying, "I encourage you to direct that the next several months be used not solely to monitor developments in Uganda, but also for the Service to gain a better understanding of the situation of Ugandans in the U.S. who will be affected if and when EVD is withdrawn. A program of informing such people of their legal options seems important, as does structuring a Service-wide approach to sensitively deal with affected clients."

° On May 2, the jury in the Tucson sanctuary trial convicted six defendants, including movement co-founder Rev. John M. Fife 3d, of conspiracy to smuggle illegal aliens into the United States. Two defendants were convicted of lesser charges including concealing, harboring, and transporting illegal aliens. Three were found not guilty on all counts.

Those convicted of conspiracy face a maximum penalty of five years in prison and $10,000 in fines. The maximum penalty for the lesser charges is five years and $2,000 in fines.

After the verdict, Verne Jervis, INS

spokesman, told the Christian Science Monitor, "Our hope is this will put people on notice who may be considering such action that the law must be followed--whether or not they agree with it," But Ignatius Bau, author of a book about the sanctuary movement said, "It is clear that the verdict is not going to stop the momentum of the movement. What the effect will be is to make people within the movement a little more careful," according to the Monitor.

Defense attorneys plan appeals, according to the Christian Science Monitor of May 5. The defendants have been released on their own recognizance, and sentencing is scheduled for July 1 in Federal District Court in Tucson.

° Conditions at the Atlanta Penitentiary were deemed "brutal and dehumanizing" by the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Courts, Civil Liberties, and the Administration of Justice. The prison holds in indefinite detention 1,834 "excludable" Cubans from the Mariel boatlift of 1980. The subcommittee report called for specific renovations and reforms, including the release or transfer of nondangerous Cubans to more comfortable and less secure facilities.

In dissenting from the subcommittee report, U.S. Rep. Pat Swindall (R-Ga.) suggested that the Cuban inmates be put in lifeboats "with life jackets" and sent back to Cuba. "All we have to do is take them to the edge of international waters, put them in boats and send them on their way," he said in an April 18 interview reported in the Atlanta Constitution.

° States will have the opportunity to be reimbursed from the federal government for the cost of incarcerating Mariel Cubans in state penal institutions, according to the May 9 Federal Register. States have until June 4 to apply for grants. A total of $4.8 million has been made available.

° The Immigration and Naturalization Service opened its Federal Alien Detention Center in Oakdale, Louisiana April 7. That day, the first 50 detainees were incarcerated in the facility. An INS memorandum, obtained by the American Civil Liberties Union and the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights through the Freedom of Information Act, outlines criteria for transfer to Oakdale. Aliens who can establish a bona fide relationship with a local immigration attorney "may be retained at their present location." However, the memo goes on to say that having a lawyer "does not necessarily mandate...detention at a particular location." The memo advises, "At the earliest point possible in the processing of an apprehended alien, he/she should be queried as to whether he/she is currently represented by counsel, and if so, by whom and for what period of time, and for what purpose."

° AIDS will be added to the list of dangerous, contagious diseases for which authorities exclude aliens from entering the United States, according to proposed rules published in the April 23 Federal Register. Comments on the proposed rules will be accepted until June 23.

Recent Developments

UNDOCUMENTED ALIENS BARRED FROM FEDERAL HOUSING SUBSIDIES

Undocumented aliens are prohibited from utilizing any federal housing subsidy programs, according to final regulations published in the April 1 Federal Register.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) announced that all present or future tenants across the spectrum of HUD subsidy programs--including public housing and "section 8" subsidies--must prove their U.S. citizenship or lawful resident status.

HUD Secretary Samuel R. Pierce was quoted in press reports as stating, "It makes me mad as hell, people sneaking into this country--and we should be helping them out? We should be kicking them out."

A key difference between regulations governing housing and those for most social services is that housing is not considered an "entitlement," whereby all who are eligible for a particular benefit are entitled to it. Housing assistance is determined by the amount of money Congress allocates for a limited number of housing units. "It is a question of who gets a scarce resource," said Steven Balis, legal advisor in the HUD general counsel's office.

Numbers of Aliens To Be Affected Unclear

It is unknown how many people will be affected by the new regulations. About 10 million people currently live in 4.16 million HUD-subsidized housing units, according to HUD. Balis told Refugee Reports that no systematic records exist on how many undocumented aliens use HUD housing. He said, however, that the actual number of people involved is not the issue. The regulations respond, he said, to a statutory requirement passed by Congress in 1981 prohibiting undocumented aliens from federally assisted housing. Congress subsequently suspended HUD's authority to implement the law until November 1984.

The long delay between the 1981 congressional action and the publication of final regulations in April 1986 has made several critics question the timing of the rules. Charles Kamasaki, director of policy analysis for the National Council of La Raza, said that drawing attention to undocumented aliens using subsidized housing is a form of "scapegoating." He said, "These rules attempt to divert attention from the failure of the federal government to provide adequate subsidized housing." In actuality, according to Kamasaki, "There is no evidence of significant numbers of undocumented aliens using HUD housing."

The suddden appearance of the HUD rules in final form had the effect of limiting comment, according to some. "There has effectively been no comment period for these final regulations, because the proposed regulations were published in 1982," according to the National Housing Law Project's Roberta Youmans, who earlier testified before a House subcommittee concerning the law.

Youmans told Refugee Reports that much of the opposition had come from landlords who feared losing subsidies during eviction procedures. She also detected opposition from local public housing authorities who, she said, "are probably moaning and groaning now about the paperwork ahead." She has already received 10-20 calls from legal services attorneys around the country inquiring about the regulations and said, "I envision lots and lots of calls" after the regulations go into effect on July 30.

Hispanic Groups Fear Regulations Will Promote Discrimination The HUD regulations have been criticized by Hispanic groups for their potential effect on Hispanic citizens and legal resident aliens alike. "Just as we have seen in past attempts to impose employer sanctions," said Kamasaki, "there is a tendency for overzealous enforcement by those who do not fully understand the law." He said the requirement that private owners renting "section 8" housing collect documentation from their tenants proving their citizenship or lawful residence could lead some owners not to rent to people who look or sound foreign--particularly Asians and Hispanics.

Balis said, however, that the regulations require all tenants to submit documentation. "It has nothing to do with accent, surname, or race," said Balis. "What we have, in fact, is a totally nondiscriminatory mechanism driven by a documentation procedure calling upon the owner to produce the right piece of paper."

Kamasaki said that the HUD regulations were likely to create a climate of fear that would deter legally resident Hispanics from applying for housing subsidies. He said that poor Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) record-keeping, combined with a historical fear of INS, would deter eligible Hispanics from gaining access to subsidized housing.

Balis said, "I think those who raise this issue have an obligation not to make people frightened." He suggested that lawful resident aliens will simply have to show their green card and that citizens will have to show documents such as birth certificates, naturalization certificates, or passports. Where a citizen lacks these documents, a third party citizen can swear that the person for whom documentation is unavailable is, in fact, a citizen. This provision does not apply for resident aliens, however.

HUD Could Pass Information to INS The regulations state that "HUD may release the information [concerning citizenship or alien status] to any Federal, State or local government agency." Quoting the preamble to the 1982 version of the final rule, the regulations state that "the Department is without authority or mandate to restrict other agencies charged with responsibility for enforcing other laws from utilizing information legitimately disclosed to them

for such purposes."

Although Balis said that the fear of being picked up by INS already keeps many undocumented aliens from living in assisted housing, Youmans said, "There will be families evicted."

Youmans expressed particular concern about households that may include both legal and undocumented aliens. Under the HUD rules, if any member of a household is undocumented, the entire household becomes ineligible for assistance. "Do the U.S. citizen children of undocumented alien parents have a right to subsidized housing?" she asked.

Balis said that housing assistance is not for individuals, but "for families living in a unit."

Landlords will have the option either of continuing to rent without assistance at the unsubsidized market rent or to evict the tenants. The rules suggest that eviction might make units available to new families who are eligible for assistance. Eviction, the supplementary information to the rules states, "may promote the objective of assuring...that scarce housing resources are preserved and used for eligible families."

REFUGEES HELP REBUILD CHICAGO NEIGHBORHOOD

Twenty years ago, Chicago restaurateur Jimmy Wong dreamed of creating a Chinatown in the city's north side. Chinatown on the south side had grown as large as it could, and was confined by industrial development and freeways. Wong envisioned a commercial area in the Uptown neighborhood that would become a focal point of Chinese culture.

Now, on the same Uptown street--Argyle Street--where Wong and some associates purchased property years ago, Asian businesses are thriving, and the neighborhood has become a center of Southeast Asian culture for refugees living in five midwestern states.

Along the way, through the initiative and hard work of refugees and city officials, a once run-down neighborhood has been revitalized, and refugee-owned businesses are providing jobs to local residents.

Argyle Street Home to 49 of Illinois' 80 Refugee-Owned Businesses Zung Dao, coordinator of the Vietnamese Association of Illinois, said that 49 refugee-owned businesses operate on or near the three Uptown blocks of Argyle Street. According to Ed Silverman, coordinator of the Illinois Refugee Resettlement Program, there are 80 refugee-owned businesses statewide--70 in the Chicago metropolitan area employing 600 people.

Along Argyle are grocery stores, restaurants, service stations, gift shops, appliance repair businesses, jewelry stores, furniture stores, and other shops. Most of the businesses are Vietnamese, but several are owned by Lao and Cambodian refugees. Business names reflect a unique combination of Southeast Asian and North American influences: "Friendship Seafood," "Thailand-Vietnam Plaza," "Great Wall Khmer," and the "Angkor Service Station." On weekends, the neighborhood is mobbed.

Nearly all of the businesses owned by refugees were begun without outside assistance, according to Steve Voss, director of Refugee Services for Travelers and Immigrants Aid of Chicago and himself a one-time co-owner, with his Vietnamese wife, of an Argyle-area restaurant. "The vast majority pooled all the family money and borrowed from friends to get their businesses going," he said.

As the refugee community grew, "the Vietnamese and other Southeast Asians provided the economic basis for growth of the street that was heretofore not possible," Silverman said.

State Funds Technical Assistance Program In July 1985, the Illinois Refugee Resettlement Program provided a grant to the Vietnamese Association of Illinois to "help refugee business owners gain access to information," Silverman said. Technical assistance is being provided in the areas of tax preparation, labor law, marketing, and loan packaging. "Our goal is to create jobs," he added.

Silverman said that it is difficult to measure the success of the neighborhood strictly by employment, since no such statistics currently exist for the Argyle area.

According to local leaders, part of the success of Argyle Street is attributable to the responsiveness of the city and its departments. According to Ward 48 Alderman Marion Volini, refugee leaders first came to her in 1977 appealing for help to rid

their neighborhood of crime.

The city promptly upgraded police protection in the neighborhood. According to Derrick Schoen, regional director of the U.S. Office of Refugee Resettlement, the police added extra patrols, and conducted personal safety classes for refugees in their own languages. Gay Nergard, owner for 17 years of the Red Rooster Lounge on Argyle Street, said, "The police have been wonderful. They are very community oriented."

According to Volini, the city has also provided community development block grants for badly needed street and sidewalk repairs and matching funds for storefront refurbishing.

Argyle Street: A Neighborhood in Transition The Southeast Asian influence in the Argyle Street neighborhood represents the latest transformation of a community which has changed dramatically over the years. "Uptown is the Ellis Island of Chicago," according to Ed Silverman. "Chicago has always had an area of this kind." An organized-crime territory in the twenties, a vibrant Jewish community in the thirties and forties, and a temporary home for poor whites in the fifties, by the sixties Uptown had become an area with a lot of transients and low-cost housing, he added.

By the time Southeast Asian refugees began arriving in the Argyle neighborhood in 1976, it had become a "ghost town," Silverman said. Randy Pauley, refugee and immigrant liaison for the office of the mayor of Chicago said that by 1980, the Argyle area was a "high crime" neighborhood, its torn up streets and sidewalks home to squatters, prostitutes, and drug dealers.

Refugees were resettled in Uptown because low-cost housing was available, Silverman said. He said that in 1975, 28 percent of the apartments in Uptown were vacant. Within four years, only four percent were vacant. "And that four percent were uninhabitable," he added.

Pauley said the city worked closely with the housing inspector's office to upgrade the quality of the buildings. "The problem is that low-income housing, where refugees are often placed, is usually sub-standard. But if you close the buildings, you displace the people." Pauley also said the city encountered problems getting absentee landlords to complete needed repairs. (For more on refugees and housing, see Refugee Reports, vol. VII, no. 3.)

Ethnic Diversity Hallmark of Area The Argyle Street area may be one of the most ethnically diverse neighborhoods anywhere in the nation, according to Silverman. He said twenty-nine languages are spoken in the local high school. Argyle Street is located in Chicago's Ward 48 (each ward has a population of 60,000), which is 10 percent Asian, 15 percent black, 15 percent Hispanic, 55 percent white, and 5 percent "other," mostly native Americans, according to Volini.

Ngoan Le, executive director of the Vietnamese Association of Illinois, said the Asian population includes Japanese, Koreans, Filipinos, Chinese from Taiwan and Hong Kong, and Thai, in addition to Southeast Asian refugees. According to Schoen, there are an estimated 10,000 refugees in the Uptown area, 6,000-7,000 of whom are Vietnamese.

In a neighborhood of such diversity, transition and change have occurred with a remarkable lack of violence. According to Pauley, "There was some community tension in 1982, when whites felt invaded by a growing Southeast Asian population." There may have been some white backlash as a result of refugee resettlement in the neighborhood, he said. But he added he was not aware of any rampant anti-Asian violence in the area.

Juju Lien, executive director of the Chinese Mutual Aid Association, said there have been "run-ins" between Laotian and Appalachian youth. Schoen said he recalled hearing reports two or three years ago of people complaining about burglaries and extortion attempts, though not aimed at a particular ethnic group. "This is a high crime area, period," he said.

Nergard said that when the Hmong first arrived, they were occasionally the targets of blacks. Often Hmong were robbed after visiting the currency exchange, she said. These robberies diminished when the police department supplied many of the Hmong with walkie-talkies, Nergard said. She said there has not been trouble between the Asians and the Hispanics.

Chinese, Southeast Asians Disagree over Success of Argyle Street City, state,

and community leaders agree that tension exists between Chinese and Southeast Asian businessmen. The origin of the conflict apparently stems from the days of Jimmy Wong and his associates. According to Volini, 10 to 15 years ago, Wong and several other members of a Chinese organization called "Hip Sing" began to buy property in the Argyle area, where Wong intended to build a Chinatown.

The plan fell through, though the reasons are unclear. Volini said rumor has it that Hip Sing headquarters was robbed of a large amount of cash--cash earmarked for Chinatown development. Nevertheless, Wong and other Hip Sing members retained ownership of most of the property on and around Argyle Street. When the refugees, particularly Vietnamese, began to open businesses in the area, they had to rent their space from the Chinese. Lien estimates that Chinese own 60-80 percent of the area's property.

Southeast Asians and Chinese disagree about who is responsible for the current success of Argyle Street. According to Lien, "Basically, the businesses are Chinese, but cater to Southeast Asian customers." She notes that Chinese have run successful businesses in the neighborhood since the seventies.

But Zung Dao said that the real commercial growth of Argyle Street can be traced to 1977. At that time, he said, there were only four businesses on the street--three Chinese restaurants and a bakery. That year, a couple from Vietnam invested $7,000 of their savings and opened a restaurant. A few months later, refugees opened two grocery stores and another restaurant. "The image of Argyle Street has changed," said Lien. And she added that many of the old Chinese resent the changes.

Argyle Street Festival Planned A focal point of community tension has been the annual Argyle Street Festival, held each August. Started four years ago by Chinese businessman and Uptown resident Charlie Soo, the festival, called "Taste of Argyle," was designed to be an Uptown version of the popular "Taste of Chicago," a showcase of city restaurants. The festival proved a success, but Soo and the city had problems.

The last three years, the city has turned operation of the festival over to the Uptown Chamber of Commerce. The Uptown Chamber is not trusted by the Chinese, who resent the fact that Soo was not given a role in festival operations the last three years, according to sources. Last year, Chinese businessmen boycotted the festival, objecting to the closing of Argyle Street to traffic on Saturday, because they claimed to do most of their business on Saturdays.

This year, according to current festival coordinator Nergard, Argyle Street will close to traffic only on Sunday. "This is sure to be the biggest festival ever," she said.

Most neighborhood and city leaders agree that lack of parking is one big problem facing the community. Only streetside parking is available to the hundreds of visitors who flood neighborhood restaurants for lunch and dinner. "On the weekends, it's crazy," according to Lien.

But parking may be the one issue that eventually unites the community. Zung Dao said he has filed an application with the city to investigate a possible site for an above-ground parking lot. Community leaders must cooperate in order to gain city approval, he said. Yet, it's difficult to get people together when, "every other day a new chamber of commerce pops up," Lien said.

Despite these difficulties, most people remain optimistic. "On the whole, the Chinese and Vietnamese are getting along better than anticipated," Nergard said. And Volini added, "I really do believe we will be working harmoniously on Argyle. Differences will be transcended."

HMONG RESETTLEMENT IN MINNESOTA DEFENDED

A March 17 letter from Sen. David Durenberger (R-Minn.) to the U.S. State Department expressing concern about the possible resettlement in the Minneapolis/St. Paul area of large numbers of Hmong refugees has prompted a quick, apparently unanimous response in support of the community's Hmong population.

Durenberger, according to the Minneapolis Star and Tribune, asked that future Hmong arrivals not be resettled in Minnesota unless they have family ties there. Durenberger wrote that the Hmong "have proved economically difficult to

assimilate. The prognosis for employability among the adult population is very poor."

He added, "I realize that the basic principle of the resettlement progam is to reunite families. However, I strongly urge that this current resettlement project be diverted from areas which have already been severely economically impacted."

The letter, according to a Durenberger aide, was prompted by local officials' concerns raised by a rumor that as many as 3,000 Hmong would be coming to the Twin Cities before the end of 1986. The State Department's response that only about 600 Hmong, all with relatives in Minnesota, would be arriving there, alleviated much of Durenberger's concern, the aide said.

There are some 10,000 Hmong in Minnesota, most of them in the Minneapolis/St. Paul area. The Star and Tribune reported that about 60 percent of them receive public assistance. However, the paper reported, "most state and local officials interviewed ...supported continued refugee resettlement here."

Officials Praise Hmong Gov. Rudy Perpich and Minneapolis Mayor Donald Fraser expressed opposition to any efforts to discourage refugee resettlement in Minnesota. According to the Star and Tribune, Fraser said, "My impression is that the Hmong people are going to do very well and that they are going to be real assets to the community. Obviously there is going to be a period of adjustment."

Responding to the suggestion in Durenberger's letter that Minneapolis and Hennepin County and St. Paul and Ramsey County are having trouble meeting school, housing, and welfare budgets because of "an unbalanced population profile," Hennepin County Commissioner Mark Andrew told the Star and Tribune, "We are having trouble meeting our budgets, but it's not because of influx of the Hmong population. It's because of other state and federal policies."

Picking up on this theme, a Star and Tribune editorial of April 27 said, "Friends of the Hmong should direct that heat [that Durenberger will get for his letter] at federal coolness toward aid for state and local refugee-assistance programs."

The editorial agrees with St. Paul Mayor George Latimer "that in future years the Twin Cities will celebrate the Hmong presence and their contribution of energy and culture."

Citing the need for "hard work and money" to overcome the "complicated social, cultural and economic problems" of the Hmong, the editorial concludes, "The Hmong are here and welcome; their families should be allowed to join them. The point of Durenberger's letter should have been support for adequate refugee-program funding. That should now become the focus of Durenberger's effort to make amends."

According to the Star and Tribune, Sen. Rudy Boschwitz (R-Minn.) said of the Hmong, "They were brave and persistent fighters for us. I'm a refugee myself, which may say something about how I feel about this." Adding that he understands the special problems the Hmong have, Boschwitz added, "The federal government could and should do more."

Projects and Programs

NGA PROJECT DEVELOPS DEFINITIONS FOR REFUGEE EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

A two-year-old ORR project aimed at developing standards to judge the performance of refugee employment services, and feared by some service providers to be a first step down a road ending in government-imposed sanctions, is now expected to recommend against quantified national standards in its final report this fall.

Officials for the project, coordinated by the National Governor's Association (NGA) under contract to ORR, said national standards are not feasible because of wide differences in populations served and services provided from region to region. Many states involved in the study, however, said that the information collected for the project has been useful to them, providing a method for analyzing employment service programs and a basis for quarterly reports to ORR.

According to a member of the project's advisory board, some service providers feared that because "performance standards are proscriptive," the project would lead to "financial sanctions" against service providers who failed to meet a national standard. They were also concerned that the

project would assert "top-down management," the goal of which would be to reverse the current practice whereby services are purchased by states with a specific outcome promised by the provider, the board member said.

Project Initially Followed JTPA Standards Concept The scope and direction of the project have changed somewhat since its beginning in April 1984. Initially, project planners for ORR and NGA thought that the performance of refugee employment services could be measured by examining the existing records of state- and local-level service providers, according to the advisory board member. This information would be used to create national numeric standards like those of the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) of 1983, which NGA was instrumental in planning and implementing.

Under JTPA, the program which replaced CETA, the secretary of labor established seven measures to monitor program participants and program cost. According to Kay Albright of the NGA, analysis of CETA, state, and JTPA employment statistics led the secretary of labor to set national numeric standards for the program. For example, 55% of the people who finish JTPA are expected to enter full-time employment.

Glossary of Definitions Developed But a statistical base like the one NGA drew from in developing JTPA measures did not exist in refugee employment service programs, Albright said. States and local service providers used widely varying definitions to describe their refugee clients and the kinds of employment services they required or used.

Consequently, Albright said, an advisory board spent several months hammering out definitions of clients and services upon which uniform data collection could be based. Definitions range from descriptions of "a job" to those dealing with family units. For example, according to ORR's director for the project, Suanne Brooks, the project defines a dependent as an "unemployed spouse, or children under 19 who share a common residence and for whom the enrollee assumed responsibility for care and maintenance."

Albright said that 34 participating states and their service providers are collecting information about several employment categories: the number of days a refugee client uses an employment service, like a job workshop or job club, before being placed in full-time unsubsidized employment; the number of days refugees receive Aid to Families with Dependent Children, Refugee Cash Assistance, or general assistance, before being placed in full-time unsubsidized employment; and the average hourly wage a refugee earns at the time of placement. On-the-job and vocational training placements are counted only if they are not publicly funded, Albright said.

In addition to these measurements, the project is also monitoring the impact of "client characteristics", such as sex, age, education level, and ethnic background, on employment and employment service utilization, Albright added.

States React To Project Officials in participating states had generally favorable comments about the project, citing especially its usefulness in providing consistent information for quarterly reports to ORR.

In New York, where service providers have been required to participate in the project, Bruce Bushart, state coordinator, said that though "the project has been a fair amount of work, feedback from service providers has been very encouraging." He said the information collected has been "pertinent to planning" and that New York will continue to use the collection system after the project ends.

Jane Lee, state refugee coordinator in Mississippi, said the project is helpful and that the definitions are very useful, though some workers were having difficulty with the definitions of "dependent" and "second wage earner."

Diversity Makes Numerical Standards Difficult The project, now in the fourth of five quarters of data collection, has already revealed that "given the complexity and diversity of refugee programs, national numeric standards would be difficult to devise and administer," according to Brooks. Albright added that she believes results of the project will show that "national performance standards are not advisable."

In Texas, the experience of Ron Deaton, contract specialist for the state's department of human resources, illustrates how the

variety of client characteristics, regional differences, and service-provider techniques make quantification of employment services for refugees difficult.

Deaton works with two service providers in the Dallas-Fort Worth area. In Fort Worth, 46 percent of the refugee clients have been in the United States more than 36 months, and 30 percent are secondary migrants. A few miles away, in Dallas County, only 20 percent have been in the United States more than 36 months, 21 percent are secondary migrants, and 52 percent have been in the United States less than six months, according to Deaton. As a further example of diversity, he added that Ethiopians, mainly single males who have been arriving over the last three years, now comprise 7 percent of the total refugee population of Dallas County, with 23 percent of those using employment services.

The fact that Dallas service providers employ ethnic staff, while Fort Worth uses native-born American staff also probably influences employment services in a way that is difficult to quantify, Deaton said. Variations in regional service and in the characteristics of refugee groups mean that national numeric standards would be difficult to apply.

Report to be Made This Fall Results of the project will be presented by NGA to ORR in September or October, Albright said. Those results will not include statistics from two important states, California and Illinois. Illinois already has an employment-service tracking system in place, according to Ed Silverman, Illinois refugee program manager, and therefore did not participate. California worked hard to join, according to Walter Barnes, acting chief of the state's office of refugee services, but was too heavily involved in implementing a refugee demostration project. Brooks said that developing national numeric standards without information from two states with large refugee populations providers would be difficult.

In February, ORR modified NGA's contract to include a three-state mini-study of "welfare savings." According to Albright, this study is designed to see if the impact of employment on welfare reduction can be measured by information available in the records of service providers and state welfare agencies. In other words, does a given amount of earnings result in less reliance on welfare and quantifiable savings?

Another part of this project may include study of the impact of client characteristics, such as length of time in the United States, education level, and age, on welfare reliance. Specifics of the project are still being discussed. Maryland, New York, and Washington are expected to participate.

PROJECT ASSISTS BATTERED REFUGEE WOMEN

The Women's Support Project of the Women's Association of Hmong and Lao, Inc., in St. Paul, Minnesota is a unique program designed to aid battered Southeast Asian refugee women.

Project Coordinator Ka Lysongtseng said that two full-time and five part-time staff work with 35 clients from the St. Paul/Minneapolis area. Eighty percent of the clients are Hmong, she said, and the rest are mostly Lao. Occasionally, Vietnamese or Cambodian women also call for help. The staff speaks English, Lao, and Hmong.

Services are provided free-of charge and include a 24-hour telephone hotline, transportation, court assistance, translation and interpretation, support groups, counseling, and temporary shelter.

According to Ka Lysongtseng, most of the clients are between the ages of 20 and 45, married, and have children. She believes wife abuse in Lao and Hmong families is a result of the conflict between the traditional male/female roles of the refugees' Southeast Asian cultures and those of Western culture.

The project has been funded each year since January 1984 by Minnesota's Department of Corrections. For further information about the project, contact Ka Lysongtseng, Women's Support Project, 1544 Timberlake Rd., St. Paul, Minnesota 55117. (612) 487-3871.

Current Research

EFFECTS OF RAPE ON REFUGEE WOMEN STUDIED

Ninety-nine of 200 Southeast Asian refugee women who responded to a national survey

said they are rape victims, or have personal knowledge of a rape victim, according to the Indochina Psychiatric Clinic and the Refugee Women in Development Project (Ref/WID) of OEF International, survey sponsors.

While stressing that the survey was "extremely modest," and "the first pilot in this area," Dr. Richard Mollica of the Indochina Psychiatric Clinic (IPC) said, "the Ref/WID study has done a very good job of highlighting the magnitude of the problem."

The survey was mailed to 1400 women--Cambodian, Lao, Hmong, and Vietnamese refugees; refugee programmers; social service providers; and mental health counselors--according to Sima Wali of Ref/WID. The women were all members of an OEF mailing list. The survey was translated into five Southeast Asian languages.

Data from the survey is still being analyzed, Mollica said. However, he noted that preliminary findings suggest some general conclusions.

First, the women did not agree about whether it is good to keep information about rape a secret. When asked, "Do refugee women feel they must keep their rape a secret?," 55 of those having personal experience or knowledge of rape said "yes," and 30 said "no." When asked, "Is it good to keep the rapes a secret?," 33 said "yes," and 52 said "no." Women who have no direct connection with rape are less likely to think that women feel they must keep rape a secret.

Refugee Women's Groups Suggested Second, the results suggest implications for those involved with providing programs and services to refugees, Mollica said. "Health practitioners and psychiatrists have suitable roles for dealing with symptoms of rape trauma," Mollica said. Those symptoms include severe depression and nightmares, both of which can sometimes be treated medically, he said. But he doubts if those same professionals could or should play a role in directly counseling victims on their rape experiences.

"There is enormous cultural pressure not to reveal rape," Mollica said. "Sometimes if a health provider learns of rape cases, it's bad for the women," he added. Jim Lavelle of IPC notes cases of husbands leaving their wives after learning the wife was raped, and of entire families of rape victims being forced to move from a state because of disapproval and even harassment by others in the refugee community.

Mollica believes there should be a major national effort to establish refugee women's groups to provide private, confidential counseling to victims. Wali said that refugee community religious leaders are being encouraged by Ref/WID to take a larger role in counseling rape victims. Mollica said that some Southeast Asian victims view rape as a spiritual problem.

Wali also noted that Ref/WID has had some success in organizing a women's group of refugee rape victims in Long Beach, California. Not only are members of the group providing support and counseling to each other, they are also involved in promoting their own economic self-sufficiency through marketing their handicrafts, she said.

Rapes Reported "During Escape" and "In Refugee Camps" According to Wali, the survey resulted from Ref/WID's attempt to understand factors inhibiting the economic self-sufficiency of refugee women. Ref/WID had known that refugee women suffered from domestic violence, but had not singled out the problem of rape as one of the inhibiting factors. The survey represented a first step toward assessing the impact of rape on the social and economic development of refugee women.

The 200 respondents reported 133 cases where rape occurred. Two-thirds of the reported rapes occurred "during the war," "during escape," or "in refugee camps."

Of the 57 rapes reported by Vietnamese, 37 occurred "during escape," a fact Wali attributed to piracy attacks.

Cambodians, who Wali said have not been well protected in refugee camps, reported 14 of 38 rapes as having occurred in those camps. They reported 11 rapes "during escape."

Respondents reported 20 rapes having occurred after their arrival in the United States. Ten were reported by Lao/Hmong, seven by Cambodians, and three by Vietnamese.

Both Mollica and Wali cautioned against drawing larger conclusions based upon this highly limited study. The sample group was small, and the data needs to be compared against responses from a control group, they

said.

However, if the results survive scientific scrutiny, then evidence will exist of a problem affecting the health of possibly tens of thousands of refugee women.

According to the Office of Refugee Resettlement, 345,000 Southeast Asian refugee women have resettled in the U.S. since 1975.

Study findings will be presented at a June conference, "The Trauma of Cambodia: the Psychological Impact of Mass Violence," featuring leaders in the field of psychiatric treatment for those suffering from trauma caused by political violence, including rape, torture, and confinement.

Meetings and Conferences

° A conference on "The Asian Woman" will be held June 17 at the Asia Society Auditorium in New York City. Focusing on health and health care of Asian women immigrants and refugees in the United States, sessions will include family planning, nutrition, use of interpreters, and epidemiological issues.

To register, send a check for $35 to Cicatelli Associates, 505 Eighth Avenue, Suite 801, New York, NY 10018. The registration deadline is May 31. For further information, call (212) 594-7741.

° York University in Toronto will hold an international symposium entitled "Refuge or Asylum--A Choice for Canada?" May 27-30. The symposium will analyze legal, philosophical, and service-related aspects of asylum. Registration is $100, plus a $25 per day housing fee. For further information, contact the Refugee Documentation Project, York University, 4700 Keele Street, North York, Ontario, Canada M3J 1P3. (416) 667-3639.

° Regions 7 and 8 of the Office of Refugee Resettlement will sponsor a multi-state conference in St. Louis titled "Refugee Resettlement in the Heartland of America: Moving toward the Nineties" June 4-6. Topics for discussion will include: changes in the direction of national refugee programs and policies; the development of model programs in social services, English as a Second Language, employment, health, and mental health; and ways to improve cooperation between refugee program staff and mutual assistance associations. The registration fee is $35.00. For more information, contact the Spring Institute for International Studies, 4891 Independence St., Suite 100, Wheat Ridge, CO 80033. (303) 431-4003.

Resources

GAO REPORTS ON REFUGEE RECEPTION AND PLACEMENT

Most refugees are not employed at the end of their first 90 days in the United States, according to the sample studied in an April report by the General Accounting Office (GAO).

The report found that core services in the first 90-day period "do not appear to be leading refugees to self-sufficiency, at least in the short term." Of the 592 cases reviewed, 62 percent of the families had at least one member who applied for cash and medical assistance.

The report called upon the Department of State to clarify the reception and placement program's goals of refugee self-sufficiency. "It is unclear whether the 90-day initial resettlement program should focus on employment, or on survival core services," the report stated.

The GAO recommended that the Department of State develop specific performance standards to evaluate the refugee reception and placement program. It noted that the Department exercises minimal control and accountability over voluntary agencies' use of reception and placement per capita grants.

The GAO recommended that voluntary agencies be required to submit program and financial reports, but did not find any evidence of misuse of per capita grants by the voluntary agencies.

Refugee Program: Initial Reception and Placement of New Arrivals Should Be Improved (GAO/NSIAD-86-69) can be ordered from the U.S. General Accounting Office, P.O. Box 6015, Gaithersburg, MD 20877. (202) 275-6241. The first five copies are free. Additional copies are $2 each, prepaid.

INDOCHINESE REFUGEE ACTIVITY
FY 86 as of March 31, 1986

COUNTRIES OF ASYLUM/RPC's	OCT. 1, 1985 POPULATION	FY 86 ARRIVALS	FY 86 REDUCTIONS TO U.S.	FY 86 REDUCTIONS 3RD COUNTRIES	FY 86 REDUCTIONS VOL. REPATR.	FY 86 REDUCTIONS OTHER	TRANSFER TO RPCs	MARCH 31, 1986 POPULATION
HONG KONG	10,039	671	42	972	0	6	762	8,920
MACAU	692	20	0	30	0	0	3	680
INDONESIA	7,048	1,704	293	1,389	0	1	1,777	5,287
MALAYSIA	8,296	2,974	349	1,387	0	9	1,595	7,926
PHILIPPINES	3,184	335	70	684	0	6	542	2,107
SINGAPORE	260	368	63	270	0	0	186	173
THAILAND	4,618	2,127	83	537	2	0	253	5,943
OTHER	1,331	226	39	233	0	1	121	1,175
TOTAL BOAT	35,468	8,425	939	5,502	2	23	5,239	32,211
THAILAND - KHMER	24,786	7,114	54	3,011	0	41	741	28,845
THAILAND - HIGHLANDERS	54,686	201	46	48	30	0	2,476	54,035
THAILAND - LAO	36,997	1,006	178	784	29	0	6,772	30,905
THAILAND - VIETNAMESE	529	493	7	158	0	0	29	850
TOTAL LAND	116,998	8,814	285	4,001	59	41	10,018	114,635
TOTAL DIRECT (ODP)	282	9,662	514	5,390	0	0	3,677	269
SUBTOTAL	152,748	26,901	1,738	14,893	61	64	18,934	147,115
BATAAN-RPC	15,333	12,741	12,204	116	0	13	0	15,707
GALANG-RPC	2,013	1,816	2,942	2	0	0	0	1,452
PHANAT NIKHOM ESL/CO	5,495	4,181	5,090	0	0	71	0	4,469
TOTAL RPCs	22,841	18,738	20,236	118	0	84	0	21,628
GRAND TOTAL	175,589	26,901	21,974	15,011	61	148	18,934	168,743

The end-of-month population figure is provided by UNHCR, and is the result of ongoing updating and adjusting of statistics. Therefore, the end-of-month population figure is not the result of a horizontal calculation based on arrivals and reductions. Admissions to the United States include those persons entering the United States in refugee status.

Source: U.S. Department of State, Bureau for Refugee Programs.

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